

Visibility Targets for the Lower Fraser Valley (LFV), British Columbia

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Abstract

Three research studies over the last eight years surveyed residents and tourists in the Lower Fraser Valley to assess visibility acceptance levels. The studies presented overhead projector displays of various levels of visible air pollution in different locations in the LFV to focus groups. The analysis from all three studies shows that perception of visibility and acceptable levels are dependent on factors specific to each vista, as well as the type and colour of the haze produced by air pollution. Based on these three studies, visibility targets are proposed and expressed as either one-day minimum visibility levels or as combinations of visibility levels over a ten day period. The studies also point out a potential discrepancy in perception of visibility changes over time compared to actual changes over the last 10 years. The relevance and utility of these types of public-acceptance targets vis-a-vis air quality standards based on benefit cost analysis are also discussed.